

# News Release



**Controller of the State of California - Kathleen Connell**

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**Immediate Release**

## **State Controller Kathleen Connell Launched Campaign to Reclaim the Ballona Wetlands for the People**

### **Community Turns Out to Clean Up Proposed Park Site**

**Los Angeles. February 24, 2001.** Despite pouring rain and blustering wind, State Controller Kathleen Connell joined more than 100 community members and environmentalists today to reclaim the last major parcel of undeveloped land in the City of Los Angeles, Area C in the Ballona Wetlands, adjacent to Marina del Rey.

Connell said she was pleased that so many committed volunteers showed up on a cold and rainy morning to begin the campaign to haul away the trash and debris that have accumulated over years of neglect. Connell told the volunteers that she would return on **Saturday, March 10, at Noon**, to cut the chain-link fence and remove barrels of waste and other debris that developers have dumped on state-owned property.

Keeping her promise to clean up the wetlands, Controller Connell, today kicked off a series of monthly cleanups that will reclaim the open space for the community and its wildlife inhabitants. "We need to preserve this area in its natural state for the people of Los Angeles. It has been a dumping ground for runoff trash and construction waste for too long," Connell said.

Area C is state-owned land, and Connell as trustee and advocate for the land's protection believes open space is a serious quality-of-life issue for the people of Los Angeles. "Future generations of Angelenos should be able to come here and enjoy the wetlands for recreation and to learn about the natural habitat." Los Angeles is one of the most under-parked cities in the country. "Our region's wetlands have been nearly destroyed by development. Many of the plant and animal species we see around us are endangered," Connell added.

Today's cleanup kickoff is the first of many monthly cleanups planned in the wetlands throughout the year.

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